

Princes Risborough Town Plan – themes arising from the draft plan consultation

From the public

Issues raised largely reflected the same issues identified during the 2014 consultation, though in general there were fewer responses that rejected growth outright. There was also good feedback on the specifics of the plan in terms of the policies and further information supplied.

- A large number of responses were related to the relief road, especially the impacts on Horsenden, Shootacre Lane and Picts Lane. There was a body of opinion that small changes in the town centre (e.g. a pedestrian bridge on Bell Street instead of the signal-controlled crossing), could provide enough capacity rather than planning for a whole new road. Roughly equal responses were for/against route 17, similarly for/against route 11b, though a preference for 11a was also expressed.
- Need to identify traffic management measures for Mill Lane, Crowbrook Road and Askett.
- Strategic impacts of the expansion, including wider transport impacts at Wycombe and in Oxfordshire; and on hospital and emergency services.
- Scepticism that rail passenger provision would keep pace with expanding population
- Proposed decking of car parks was on the whole unpopular – but lack of alternatives proposed.
- Use of cycles on Church Lane resisted by local residents.
- Desire for housing for local people.
- Concern at lack of homes/jobs match.
- Integration across the railway line still a concern.
- Overall pressure on infrastructure especially GP provision.
- Provision for extra dentist and faith space was highlighted.
- Capacity of town centre to meet future retail needs questioned.
- Support for town centre improvements, but mixed feedback on overall traffic strategy in town.
- Continuing concerns about flooding.
- Adverse impacts on views from the Chilterns and consequent effects on tourism.
- More emphasis sought on design quality / design character.
- Feedback from Kingsmead preferred open space to residential development but with some assurances on privacy, parking and traffic on Mill Lane.

From technical agencies and Duty to Cooperate partners

Overall, there were some useful responses which highlighted potential gaps in evidence or interpretation of evidence. Clearly a strong tension exists between the need for WDC to meet the District's own needs as far as possible while respecting the local environment.

- Neighbouring Districts emphasised the need for WDC to meet its own housing needs by maximising the capacity of expansion at Princes Risborough.
- The Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) and BBOWT (wildlife trust) emphasised the need to constrain development to protect the environment. Historic England suggests a more positive strategy for Alscot Conservation Area.
- The CCB objects to any new road, or widening of existing road, within the AONB.
- Oxfordshire authorities seek comfort that expansion at PR will not have adverse impact across the border.
- Better illustration of pedestrian and cycle links to wider countryside and existing promoted routes.
- More flooding analysis required by Environment Agency.
- Historic England requires the Conservation Area assessments at Alscot and Horsenden to be refreshed.
- Sport England requires more detail on type and location of pitches, related to specific identified needs.
- Network Rail and Chiltern Railways supportive of Plan.

From land interests

Many useful points which will help the Plan to meet the tests of soundness in terms of being justified and effective – i.e. is there appropriate evidence, and is there a reasonable prospect that the Plan can be delivered? But also challenges to the requirements placed on developers in terms of non-residential uses and infrastructure burden.

- More context required regarding objectively assessed needs and overall District strategy. Demonstrate how Princes Risborough relates to wider Housing Market Area issues.
- Be more specific on housing number for the expansion.
- Need for two local centres challenged.
- Infrastructure needs to be more strongly evidenced. Overall package is too onerous.
- More detail/certainty required on phasing and delivery. Show how development can come forward without all infrastructure being settled immediately.
- 40% affordable housing is not viable.
- Set out respective roles of CIL and s106, testing against viability.
- Clarity and certainty over Master Plan process sought.
- Density requirements need to be clearer.
- Concept plan policy should be more flexible.
- Buffer zone for Longwick compromised by existing housing.
- Better justification for buffers to wildlife areas, to Alscot, and to open space requirements / location.
- Need to show constraints plan.

- Longwick Rd should have a stronger role – group facilities/school here.
- Land north of Mill Lane should be allocated for housing.
- Molins sports ground should be promoted for residential use.
- Requirement for an overall drainage strategy resisted.
- Stronger links between evidence base and how Plan has responded to it.